

THE PENDULUM

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PHOTO BY MCT CAMPUS

America elects first black president, challenges ahead

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Design Editor

Democratic Sen. Barack Obama won 359 electoral votes to Republican John McCain's 163 Tuesday to become the 44th president of the United States.

Obama won in Republican strongholds Colorado, Indiana and Virginia. Democrats have only won in Virginia once since 1948 and have only won in Indiana once since 1936.

He also won key swing states Ohio and Pennsylvania, as well as Nevada, New Mexico, Iowa and Florida, all of which went to Republican President George Bush in 2004.

"I think that it was, in some ways, a bit surprising that his electoral victory was so decisive," Associate Professor of political science Sharon Spray said.

College Democrats President Daniel Shutt said the student reaction on campus has been overwhelming.

"I've been able to communicate with quite a few students, and there's not much range to their emotions," Shutt said. "It's mostly just pure elation at this point."

College Republicans President Nick Ochsner said that on election night, Republicans' early hope quickly turned into disappointment.

"In the very early hours, it looked like McCain had a fighting chance, and of course that evaporated as the night went on," Ochsner said. "Once you saw that key states were lost you pretty much knew."

Obama's victory sets a number of precedents. He will be the first black president, the fifth youngest president in history at age 47 and the first president with foreign-born parents in almost 80 years.

"It's a magnificent moment in our country's history," Bacot said. "I think it will go down as one of the premiere presidential elections in the history of our country."

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